

PUNISHER MAX #1
First Draft
By Jason Aaron

Page One

Six Panels

- 1.1) Tight on a mob thug being punched in the face by the Punisher. The guy's already bruised and bloodied a bit. Frank's been working him over for a while already.

PUNISHER (from off): Talk.

- 1.2) Punisher and the mob thug are alone in a darkened warehouse. The thug is stripped naked, stretched out spread-eagle on a big metal table, bound by his wrists and ankles to the corners of the table. He's a beefy Italian hood who's showing some backbone and defiance, turning his head to spit blood at Punisher's feet, grumbling. The Punisher stands looking down at him. There's a toolbox sitting atop the table, its lid closed.

THUG: Ptew

THUG: **Fuck** you.

- 1.3) Tight on the mob thug, snarling, defiant.

THUG: Why should I tell you anything, you piece a' shit cocksucker? I know you're gonna kill me no matter what.

- 1.4) Tight on the Punisher, staring back, cold and merciless.

PUNISHER: You're right. I am gonna kill you no matter what.

PUNISHER: But if you tell me something useful...

- 1.5) Tight on Punisher's hand, setting a pistol down on the table. A typical sort of Beretta pistol:

<http://www.topgunfirearms.com/beretta92f.htm>

PUNISHER (from off): I use this.

PUNISHER (from off): You decide to play the hardass and not say anything...

- 1.6) Tight on Punisher's hand opening the rusted old toolbox so the mob thug can see what's inside. Inside are pliers, wire cutters, a hacksaw, a hatchet, a big container of salt and various knives, from big carving knives down to scalpels.

PUNISHER (from off): I use these.

Page Two

Five Panels

- 2.1) Tight on the thug, not so defiant anymore, showing his fear a bit, neck straining, lifting his head to stare in fear at that collection of torture tools.

PUNISHER (from off): Talk.

THUG: Look, I don't know nothing, okay? I'm just a... just a small time soldier for Don Rigoletto. I shoot who they say shoot.

- 2.2) Punisher turns his back to the thug, reaching into the toolbox for something. Behind him, the thug is panicking, terrified, trying to see what Punisher is doing.

PUNISHER: Hacksaw or pliers. You wanna choose, or should I?

THUG: For fucksake, what am I gonna tell you that you don't already know? There's nothing happening out there! You got the whole fucking city scared shitless!

PUNISHER: Hacksaw it is.

- 2.3) Punisher turns back, hacksaw in hand. The thug is wide-eyed with fear, talking fast.

THUG: Wait! Wait! I been hearing some things, all right? Things about the Kingpin.

PUNISHER: Bullshit. Kingpin's a myth.

- 2.4) Punisher is moving in with the hacksaw. The thug is staring at it, shrieking in fear, trying to twist away.

THUG: Wait, there's more! Just let me talk!

PUNISHER: We'll talk more in a minute.

2.5) Tight on the Punisher as he's sawing in the thug's armpit, blood splashing on his hands, and he's just calm and cold as can be.

THUG: AAAAAAAAAHHHH!!!

Page Three

Five Panels

- 3.1) Tight on the fist of Don Rigoletto slamming down hard on a table.

RIGOLETTO: Goddamn Punisher!

- 3.2) Pull back. We see Don Rigoletto, a middle-aged Italian mob boss with an eyepatch. He's angry, gazing out at the men seated around him. This is a meeting of the mafia's ruling Commission, so there are five mob bosses seated at a round table. Everyone's listening to Rigoletto. The room is dark. Bodyguards or lieutenants wait back in the shadows. Rigoletto's bodyguard, Wilson Fisk, is back in the shadows behind him, but we won't see him at all until a few pages later.

RIGOLETTO: For 30 years we been putting up with this son of a bitch. Thirty fucking years!

RIGOLETTO: How many of our soldiers has he killed?
How many businesses has he ruined?
How much of our own fucking money
has he stolen and used against us?

- 3.3) Tight on some of the other bosses seated at the table, all Italian gangsters in expensive suits, all in their 40s or 50s, some fat, some smoking cigars. Nobody who's really that old, since Punisher has already killed off all the old school bosses. One boss here, Jackie Cesare, is incredulous, sneering.

RIGOLETTO (from off): For too goddamn long, we've watched this motherfucker get stronger at our expense. Today, he's more of a

force than ever, while we stand on the
brink of fucking oblivion.

CESARE: Speak for yourself, Rigoletto.

3.4) Tight on Rigoletto, intense and earnest, gazing out at the other
bosses.

RIGOLETTO: You know it's true, Jackie. You all do.

RIGOLETTO: Robert Kennedy, the RICO Act, the feds,
the rats like Henry Hill... this fucking
Punisher is about to do what none of
them ever could.

RIGOLETTO: And once he brings us down, what then?
We leave our streets for the niggers or
the Ivans to take over? Fuck that. I say
now's the time for us to put aside our
petty bullshit squabbles and end this
fiasco once and for all.

3.5) Rigoletto leans forward, looking hard into the eyes of the other
bosses, intense.

RIGOLETTO: Gentlemen, either the Punisher dies...

RIGOLETTO: Or **we** do.

Page Four

Five Panels

4.1) A couple of the other mob bosses speak up. Doesn't matter which ones, just not Cesare.

OTHER BOSS #1: I'd brain my fucking mother for a chance to kill the Punisher. Who wouldn't? But it's fucking impossible.

OTHER BOSS #2: Nicky Cavella and his crew. That cunt-faced mick psycho Finn Cooley. The goddamn Barracuda. They were all tougher than Tungsten and mean as all fucking hell. But not a goddamn one of 'em could do the job.

4.2) Rigoletto is calm and confident, smiling a bit.

RIGOLETTO: I have found the man who can.

OTHER BOSS (from off): We've all heard that before, Rigoletto.

RIGOLETTO: Trust me... you've never seen anything like this guy before. He will kill the Punisher. I promise you.

OTHER BOSS (from off): Well, where the fuck is this miracle worker?

4.3) Boss Cesare starts to get up from the table, annoyed, impatient.

RIGOLETTO (from off): I'm in the process of getting him here.

CESARE: Great. You coulda just put that in a fucking telegram and saved me the

drive. Call me when the fuck is dead
and I'll bake a cake.

- 4.4) Boss Cesare stops, looking back at Rigoletto, who's staring hard at him.

RIGOLETTO: This ain't gonna be no overnight deal here. We're talking about hunting and killing the most dangerous mass murderer this city's ever seen.

RIGOLETTO: We're looking at weeks, maybe months before it's finished. I called you here to talk about what we're gonna do in the meantime.

RIGOLETTO: You can all just sit back and pray that you'll still be here once the Punisher's finally dead.

- 4.5) Cesare is taking his seat again, still showing his impatience.

RIGOLETTO (from off): Or we can talk about a plan to stave off our fucking extinction a little bit longer.

CESARE: And I suppose you got an idea for that too then, huh? Just spit it the fuck out already.

Page Five

Five Panels

- 5.1) Rigoletto grins a sly grin. All the other bosses are listening intently.

RIGOLETTO: The Kingpin.

- 5.2) The other bosses are all glaring at Rigoletto, surprised, confused, wondering what the fuck he's up to. Rigoletto just grins a sly grin.

OTHER BOSS: Kingpin's a fucking myth, we all know that. Just some fairytale bullshit the street rats gossip about. There ain't been no real Boss of Bosses since '31.

RIGOLETTO: That's right. So we create one.

- 5.3) Cesare is growling, suspicious.

CESARE: I don't like where this is headed.

RIGOLETTO (from off): Calm down, Jackie. I'm not suggesting anybody take over as head of the commission. That'd be fucking suicide.

- 5.4) Tight on Rigoletto, intense, serious, trying to win the others over.

RIGOLETTO: What I'm talking about is engineering a wild goose chase to keep the Punisher out of our hair.

RIGOLETTO: Punisher kills a family from the top down, we know that. Hell, that's how most of us got a seat at this table. If we

can convince him there's a Boss of
Bosses out there somewhere, he'll take
the fucking bait, no doubt.

- 5.5) Rigoletto stares at the others, but they're not buying in. They're shaking their heads or looking away, dismissing his idea.

RIGOLETTO: All it takes is a coupla smart fucks with
computers and a bit of a bankroll.

OTHER BOSS: It won't work. Castle's too smart.

RIGOLETTO: It will work, if we do it right. It won't be
cheap, but hell, he's robbing us blind as
it is. And all we gotta do is keep him
distracted until my miracle worker can
work his magic.

Page Six

Five Panels

6.1) Rigoletto glares angrily at someone shouting from off-panel.

JOEY (from off): I don't like it.

6.2) A cocky young mob hood (Joey) with slicked back hair has stepped toward the table from the shadows. The bosses at the table are all glaring at him, annoyed or aghast that he's interrupting the meeting. Joey glares angrily at Rigoletto.

RIGOLETTO: Who the fuck asked you?

JOEY: He's lying to us. This is just some scheme for him to make himself the Boss of Bosses, I'd bet my fucking eye teeth.

6.3) Rigoletto glares angrily over at Cesare. Cesare looks uncomfortable, embarrassed.

RIGOLETTO: Your *capo bastone* speaks out of turn, Jackie. You wanna shut him up or should I?

6.4) Cesare barks at Joey, but Joey ignores him, arrogantly shouting at Rigoletto, walking toward him.

CESARE: Joey—

RIGOLETTO: I'd like to see you try, you withered old fuck!

6.5) Joey is pointing toward Rigoletto, speaking to the whole table.

JOEY: Why should anybody listen to this chickenshit bastard? He's fucking scared is what it is. He's gonna feed you all to the Punisher to save his own ass!

CESARE: Joey, shut the fuck up!

Page Seven

Three Panels

7.1) We're looking over the shoulder of Fisk as he's stepping from the shadows in the back of the room, coming up behind Rigoletto.

RIGOLETTO: No, it's a fair question. Why should anybody listen to a withered old fuck like me?

7.2) Rigoletto is grinning a shit-eating grin. Behind him looms Wilson Fisk, emerging from the shadows, a huge, hulking, intimidating mass of man. Fisk looks pretty much just like the Marvel U version, massive, like a sumo wrestler, but rock solid, not fat. He's in his late 30s. Unlike his Marvel U version though, he's wearing a black suit here, not his usual white suit (we'll see him wearing the white suit in later issues, once he finally becomes the Kingpin). Fisk is glaring out at us, fists balled, ready for action.

RIGOLETTO: Let me offer up one possible answer.

7.3) Fisk is moving toward Joey, hands by his side, just coming in slowly for the kill like a shark. Joey is grinning, laughing. The other bosses all watch quietly.

RIGOLETTO (from off): Gentlemen, I believe you know my bodyguard, Mr. Wilson Fisk of Hell's Kitchen.

RIGOLETTO (from off): Wilson, this is Joey D'Amico.

JOEY: Holy shit, is he gonna **eat** me?

Page Eight

Four Panels

- 8.1) Fisk is just standing there, hands at his side, facing Joey, not making any sort of threatening move, calm and cold as a rock. Joey is laughing, waving him away, acting like he doesn't wanna fight.

JOEY: C'mon, fat boy, sit down, I ain't looking for no—

- 8.2) Joey suddenly swings wildly at him, but Fisk simply steps to avoid it.

JOEY: Ha!

- 8.3) Fisk has Joey by the back of the head, slamming him face first into the wall, so hard it cracks the plaster.

JOEY: ut

- 8.4) Joey is dazed, on his knees, nose bloodied. Fisk is grabbing him by the head with both hands, starting to squeeze.

JOEY: uuuhh

Page Nine

Six Panels

- 9.1) Fisk's huge hands engulf Joey's head, squeezing it hard, like it's a grape he's going to squash. Joey is grimacing in pain, grabbing at Fisk's hands, but he can't pry them off. It's like his head is caught in a vice. Fisk looks down at him with a blank, cold expression.

JOEY: GGAAAA—GET THE FUCK—

- 9.2) The other bosses are watching, calmly, except for Cesare who looks nervous and is sweating a bit.

JOEY (from off): FUCKIN' FUCK—FUCKIN'—

- 9.3) Tight on Rigoletto watching, grinning a bit.

JOEY (from off): NNNNG

- 9.4) Fisk is still squeezing with all his might and Joey's eyes are bulging out, like they're about to pop out of his head. His face is smooshed together, all red, veins bulging on his neck.

JOEY: GGGAAA

OTHER BOSS (from off): Okay, Rigoletto, that's enough.

Let's—

- 9.5) Back to the bosses, looking on in shock and horror and revulsion now. One of them turns his head and vomits.

JOEY: AAAAIIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

OTHER BOSS: Oh fuck.

Page Eleven

Five Panels

11.1) Cesare is hissing an order to a couple of his other hoods who are picking Joey up off the floor. They're looking at Joey in horror, not really wanting to touch him.

JOEY: **AAAAIIIEEEEEEE!!! My eyes! Jesus fuck!**

CESARE: Get him the fuck outta here.

11.2) Joey is being dragged out of the room. Rigoletto just wants to get back to business.

JOEY: **Jesus fucking Christ!**

RIGOLETTO: Now then...

11.3) From Fisk's POV or from over his shoulder at the back of the room, we're looking out at the table of bosses, getting back to business.

RIGOLETTO: Let's get back to the subject at hand, shall we?

11.4) Tight on Fisk, stuffing the handkerchief back in his pocket, still cold and emotionless.

RIGOLETTO (from off): The Kingpin.

11.5) Tighter on Fisk. On his cold, beady eyes.

Page Twelve

Five Panels

12.1) Exterior of a big mansion in the woods, late at night. The two hoods have led Joey out the backdoor of the mansion and are heading out into the woods. A couple of mob soldiers walk the perimeter, guns in hand, standing guard.

JOEY: Oh God...

12.2) Tighter on the hoods, dragging Joey. Joey's eyes are still dangling out, but he's turning his head like he's looking around. The two hoods have overcome their initial shock and disgust. Now they look like a couple of guys just taking out the trash, like it's no big deal.

JOEY: My eyes, Jesus Christ... I can't... Are we going to the hospital now?

HOOD: Sure thing, Joey.

12.3) Tight on Joey, eyes bouncing around on their optic nerves while they walk.

JOEY: I don't know, do they just... just stuff 'em back in or...

HOOD (from off): This is far enough.

12.4) The hoods drop Joey to the ground in the middle of the woods.

JOEY: What? But we... But this...

JOEY: This isn't the hospital...

12.5) The two hoods stand over him with their pistols drawn and pointed at his head.

HOOD: Shut the fuck up, Joey.

Page Thirteen

Four Panels

13.1) Both hoods are suddenly shot in the head, blasting their skulls open.

13.2) Joey is still kneeling, splattered with blood and brains now, touching himself, feeling for bullet holes, freaking out. The two hoods lie dead.

JOEY: Oh fuck, I been shot, I been shot! Oh fuck!

13.3) Joey is down on his hands and knees now, eyes still dangling. Punisher's boots step into view.

JOEY: Oh God in heaven, am I...

JOEY: Am I dead?

13.4) Full reveal on Punisher standing over Joey, looking around, assault rifle with silencer in hand, something like this:

<http://www.impactguns.com/store/AAC-M42000.html>

There's also an AA-12 assault shotgun slung over his shoulder:

[http://www.defensereview.com/stories/aa-12/U.S.%20Marine%20Firing%20AA-12%20Full-Auto%20Shotgun%20\(AA12%20Machine%20Shotgun\).jpg](http://www.defensereview.com/stories/aa-12/U.S.%20Marine%20Firing%20AA-12%20Full-Auto%20Shotgun%20(AA12%20Machine%20Shotgun).jpg)

PUNISHER: Not yet.

Page Fourteen

Six Panels

14.1) Flashback to the mob thug from pages 1-2, still being tortured.

We're looking at one of his hands, still tied to the table.

Punisher has used a scalpel to slit all of his fingers open, lengthwise, and now he's holding up the big container of salt and dumping it on the wounds. The bloody scalpel lies nearby.

The thug writhes in pain.

THUG (from off): **RRRAAAARRRRRRGGHH!!!**

14.2) Punisher stands over the thug, looking down at him. The thug has wounds cut into his armpits from the hacksaw. His fingers are slit open on both hands, with salt dumped on them. He's crying and gritting his teeth in agony.

PUNISHER: I'm all out of fingers. Talk.

14.3) Tight on the thug, giving in, broken, crying.

THUG: Okay, okay, God, please just... Just stop...

THUG: There's a meeting... tonight... Rigoletto called it...

PUNISHER (from off): Who'll be there?

THUG: The heads of all the families... whichever ones you haven't already killed... Jesus...

14.4) Punisher picks up his pistol. The thug is bawling, his eyes closed.

PUNISHER: Where?

THUG: Rigoletto has a place in the Poconos... That's all I know...

THUG: Oh Jesus, that's all I fuckin' know...

14.5) Punisher shoots the thug in the face.

14.6) From behind, we see the Punisher leaving, carrying his toolbox.
The thug is still laid out on the table.

Page Fifteen

Five Panels

15.1) Back to Joey in the woods, tentatively starting to touch his
dangling eyes.

JOEY: Ah... just gotta... oh fuck me... gotta
push 'em back in...

PUNISHER (from off): How many inside?

15.2) Punisher stands over Joey, looking toward the house. Joey is
starting to push his eyes back in.

JOEY: What? It's... it's everybody. All the
bosses.

JOEY: Ah, that fuck Rigoletto and his fat fuckin'
whale... I'm gonna—

PUNISHER: Soldiers?

15.3) Tight on Joey pushing his eyes all the way back in, hands
covering his face.

JOEY: Soldiers? Yeah, fuckin' shit-ton of 'em.

JOEY: Ah fuck, almost...

15.4) Joey looks up now, big stupid grin on his face, eyes back in their
sockets, but they're cockeyed. One's pointing one way, the
other's pointing another way.

JOEY: Hey! I can see!

15.5) From behind Joey, we see he's looking down the barrel of the Punisher's rifle with Frank about to fire.

JOEY: uh

Page Sixteen

Six Panels

16.1) Back to Fisk, still standing in the shadows. His head is turned, eyes narrowed. He just heard a shot from outside.

RIGOLETTO (from off): Okay, so we take a vote...

16.2) Fisk is stepping out of the darkness, moving toward Don Rigoletto, eyes still narrowed, listening intently. Don Rigoletto is speaking to the other bosses who all glare back, still against his idea.

RIGOLETTO: All in favor of Operation Kingpin?

CESARE: Give it up, Rigoletto, we ain't votin' for your crazy ass idea.

16.3) A mob soldier suddenly throws open the door. Bodyguards inside quickly reach for their guns. The soldier is terrified, in a panic.

SOLDIER: Holy shit! We got trouble! It's the goddamn Punisher!

16.4) The bosses are all getting to their feet, hauling ass for the back door, terrified, panicking.

BOSS: Everybody out the back!

16.5) Fisk puts a hand on Don Rigoletto's back, stopping him.

FISK: No.

16.6) Don Rigoletto looks back at Fisk, who's calm and cool as can be.

FISK: Not that way.

Page Seventeen

Four Panels

17.1) From outside the house, we see Fisk smashing out through a wall, just running through it like a fucking bulldozer.

17.2) Fisk is hurrying Don Rigoletto along the side of the house toward a driveway in the back where a limo sits. Rigoletto looks like he's in shock.

FISK: C'mon, boss. We gotta move.

17.3) Fisk is shoving Rigoletto into the front seat of the limo from the driver's side. The limo driver lies on the hood, shot dead. The windshield is cracked.

RIGOLETTO: Oh Jesus.

FISK: Just get in.

17.4) Fisk stops, looking back across the top of the car toward the house.

Page Eighteen

Five Panels

- 18.1) From over Fisk's shoulder, we see Punisher making war against the mob soldiers at the backdoor of the house. He's just walking along, firing his assault shotgun, blasting guys to hell as they try to come out. Bodies of mob thugs lie everywhere. Some guys are trying to get cover and return fire. Maybe we see a couple of the mob bosses already gunned down. We see Punisher from the side or the back. He's not looking at us.
- 18.2) Tight on the Punisher, still not looking at us.
- 18.3) Tight on Fisk, pointing a pistol across the top of the car. He has the Punisher in his sights.
- 18.4) Fisk raises his gun, giving up the shot. He can't take it. He knows he still needs the Punisher alive.
- 18.5) Fisk drives away with Rigoletto cowering inside.

Page Nineteen

Four Panels

19.1) Exterior of a Hell's Kitchen tenement building. Early morning.

I gather Hell's Kitchen ain't really the rough and tumble neighborhood it used to be, but I still think that's where our Fisk should be from and where he should call home. The building he lives in should be something pretty poor and working class. He hasn't hit the big time yet.

19.2) Fisk is in a t-shirt, in the bathroom of his tiny apartment, splashing water in his face.

VANESSA (from off): How'd it go?

19.3) His wife, Vanessa, leans in the doorway of the bathroom, dressed in a nightgown. She's pretty but a little haggard, worn down by life. She has black hair, but without the gray streaks we see in the Marvel U version. Fisk is wiping his face with a towel.

FISK: Could've gone better.

VANESSA: They go for it?

19.4) Fisk turns to face her, coming toward her.

FISK: We'll see.

VANESSA: He tell 'em it was your idea?

FISK: A man like Rigoletto doesn't do business that way.

Page Twenty

Five Panels

20.1) Fisk takes her in his arms and kisses her passionately.

20.2) Tight on their faces or just their lips, close together.

VANESSA: He's using you, you know. Not just for your brawn, but your brain too.

FISK: Of course he is. But don't worry. I know what I'm doing.

20.3) Fisk is in the living room, Vanessa behind him. Again, a pretty cheaply furnished apartment. Crappy old TV. Furniture looking a little threadbare. Nothing fancy. Fisk is looking down at his four year old son, Richard, asleep on the couch.

VANESSA: He tried to wait up for you.

20.4) Fisk gently caresses the face of his son, waking the boy a bit. Fisk loves his son more than anything.

RICHARD (faintly): Daddy?

20.5) Tight on Fisk, beaming down at his son, proudly, lovingly.

FISK: Go back to sleep, Richard.

VANESSA (from off): Wilson, your phone...

Page Twenty-One

Five Panels

21.1) Fisk is talking on the cellphone. His wife is carrying Richard, still sleeping, out of the room.

FISK: This is Fisk.

21.2) Cut to Don Rigoletto in a huge bed, with expensive silk sheets. He's in silk boxer shorts, laying on his back, phone to his ear. A gorgeous woman lies sleeping next to him, naked.

RIGOLETTO: Quick thinking last night, Wilson.

FISK (from phone): That's what you pay me for, sir.

RIGOLETTO: Some of the others weren't so lucky.
Punisher took out Cesare and most all of
the Pizzo crew.

21.3) Back to Fisk. He's stepping out onto his balcony. Or would an apartment like this even have a balcony? Maybe he's just standing in front of a window.

FISK: Castle's slipping. He usually gets
everybody.

RIGOLETTO (from phone): The others already called me this
morning. I guess having the Punisher
almost kill 'em helped win them to our
cause.

21.4) Tight on the phone held to Fisk's ear.

RIGOLETTO (from phone): They wanna go with it. I need you
to get things moving as soon as possible.

21.5) From behind Fisk, we see him just standing there, staring out at the city.

RIGOLETTO (from phone):Wilson?

FISK: Yes, sir, I hear you.

Page Twenty-Two

Splash Page

Fisk has the phone to his ear, grinning like a motherfucker. A devious, sly, evil fucking grin.

FISK: One Kingpin, comin' up.

TITLE: **KINGPIN Part One**

CREDITS: